

Monroe Doctrine

By Cathy Pearl

Americans were very happy when other countries started to win their freedom. The president wasn't happy. He was worried. These new countries had won their freedom from bigger countries in Europe. The president was afraid of what these bigger countries would do.

In 1815, four countries in Europe joined together. They made an alliance. They planned to stop any fighting that started near their countries. They also talked about helping Spain. They would even help Spain get some of the colonies back. Many of these colonies had already won their freedom.

Britain was also worried. It worried about the trading that they did with other countries. Britain was sure their trade would be hurt if Spain took over its colonies again. They thought the United States should join them. They would help the colonies in Latin America.

James Monroe was president at the time. He did not join with Britain. He made a bold move in 1823. He made a statement about how the United States would treat the colonies. This was called the Monroe Doctrine.

Monroe said many things. He said the United States would not bother the countries in Europe. He also said that the United States would not bother any colonies. He also warned the countries in Europe. He told them to not try to regain control of any country that had won its freedom.

The Monroe Doctrine also said that the United States would fight if needed. No other country could start colonies near that country. They weren't afraid of a war to keep this from happening.

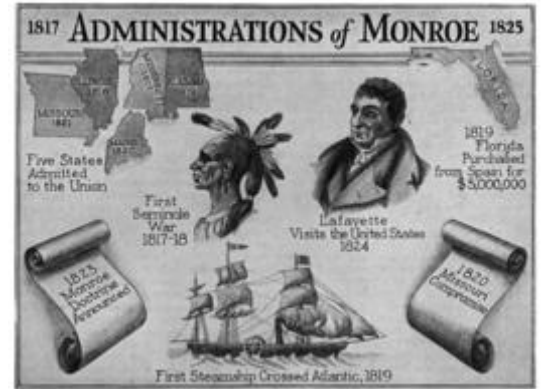
It was very brave for Monroe to make this statement. The United States did not have enough military power to back up what they had said. In the end, Britain supported the statement. That country had a very strong navy. They would help stop countries in Europe from building any new colonies.

The United States kept getting stronger. They used the Monroe Doctrine many times. It helped them make decisions on how to deal with other countries. For fifty years, the navy of Britain was ready to support the Monroe Doctrine if needed.

Even though Britain agreed with it, the statement was used against them. In 1836, the United States told Britain not to align with Texas. It used the Monroe Doctrine to support the argument.

In 1904, another president added to the statement. He said the United States had the right to deal with Latin America but no one else did.

The Monroe Doctrine has helped the United States make decisions about dealing with other countries for more than one hundred years. It will probably be a part of making decisions for many more years to come.



Name _____



Date _____

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Questions

- _____ 1. How many countries joined together in 1815?
- A. Three
 - B. Four
 - C. One
- _____ 2. Who backed up the United States after the Monroe Doctrine was made?
- A. No one
 - B. Britain
 - C. Spain
- _____ 3. How long did the British Navy back up the United States?
- A. Five years
 - B. Fifty years
 - C. Fifteen years
- _____ 4. When was the largest addition to the Monroe Doctrine?
- A. 1823
 - B. 1904
 - C. 1986

5. What did the United States tell Britain not to do in 1836?

6. What was the United States not afraid to do, if needed?

How did the Monroe Doctrine change how the United States would deal with other countries?
